

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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P 050136Z MAY 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA, US

SUBJECT: JIDDA WATER CRISIS

REFS: (A) JIDDA 3072, (B) STATE 22746

1. USG AGENCIES WOULD LIKE TO BE RESPONSIVE TO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE REQUEST FOR COE ASSISTANCE TO HELP ALLEVIATE CURRENT JIDDA WATER CRISIS. HOWEVER, THIS CLEARLY IS A CIVILIAN-TYPE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE MEANING OF SECTION 607 OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT.

2. AS EMBASSY AWARE, WE ARE AWAITING SAG RESPONSE TO PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF 1965 MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT TO PERMIT COE PARTICIPATION IN CIVILIAN SECTOR SUBJECT TO CASE-BY-CASE REVIEW (REF B). UNTIL SAG RESPONDS, WE HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NO LEGAL BASIS TO CONSIDER THIS TYPE REQUEST. LAST YEAR'S

CORPS PARTICIPATION IN REPAIRS TO JIDDA WATER LINE WAS ON AN EXCEPTIONAL BASIS DUE TO EXTREME EMERGENCY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A PRECEDENT OR AS BASIS CONTINUATION OF THIS WORK.

3. EMBASSY SHOULD BRING TO ATTENTION OF MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE THAT USG IS AWAITING SAG REPLY AGREEING TO PROPOSED MODIFICATION OF 1965 COE AGREEMENT. WHEN IN HAND, WE WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE PROMPTLY IN MEETING MINISTER'S

REQUEST. COE WOULD BE PLEASED TO BE ABLE TO COOPERATE IN THIS IMPORTANT PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD ALSO BE APPROPRIATE, HOWEVER, TO SUGGEST TO SAUDIS THAT THEY CONSIDER CONTRACTING DIRECTLY WITH A COMMERCIAL FIRM TO ACCOMPLISH NECESSARY WORK TO ALLEVIATE PRESENT WATER CRISIS IF THEY ANTICIPATE IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE TO RESPOND TO OUR NOTE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.
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